

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently amended) Tyre ~~(3; 30)~~ for vehicles, in particular for motor vehicles, which has an axis ~~(13)~~ of symmetry and comprises a tread ~~(16)~~, two sidewalls ~~(15)~~, two beads ~~(8)~~ which are attached to a wheel rim ~~(2)~~ made of elastomer material, and at least one tubular reinforcement body ~~(18; 35)~~ for coaxial reinforcement on the said axis ~~(13)~~, which is surrounded by the said tread ~~(16)~~ and extends between the said sidewalls ~~(15)~~; each of the said sidewalls comprising a respective resilient annular membrane ~~(24)~~ with a straight generatrix which forms an angle (A) other than 90° with the axis ~~(13)~~ of the tyre ~~(3)~~; characterised in that the said tubular reinforcement body ~~(35)~~ comprises an annular belt ~~(36)~~ and a plurality of blocks ~~(37)~~ which are supported by the said annular belt in positions adjacent to one another, and can be forced against one another in order to apply resistance to the circumferential actions of compression present on the tyre during the rotation of the tyre itself.

2. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 1, characterised in that the said tubular body ~~(18; 35)~~ has a dimension measured parallel to the said axis ~~(13)~~ which is substantially the same as that of the tread ~~(16)~~ measured in the same direction.

3. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterised in that the said tubular body ~~(18; 35)~~ has lateral through-apertures ~~(21)~~.

4. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 3, characterised in that at least some of the said through-apertures ~~(21)~~ are apertures which are elongate in the circumferential direction.

5. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 3 ~~or 4~~, characterised in that at least some of the said apertures ~~(21)~~ are aligned with one another circumferentially in order to form a circumferential row of apertures.

6. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 5, characterised in that the said tubular body ~~(18;35)~~ comprises at least one pair of the said circumferential rows of apertures which are spaced from one another in the axial direction.

7. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ 1, characterised in that the said tubular body ~~(18;35)~~ is delimited by respective cylindrical surfaces which are coaxial to the axis ~~(13)~~; at least one of the said cylindrical surfaces has a generatrix line which is straight and parallel to the axis ~~(13)~~ of the tyre ~~(3)~~.

8. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~one of~~ claims 1 ~~to 6~~, characterised in that the said tubular body ~~(18)~~ is a corrugated body.

9. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 8, characterised in that the said tubular body has at least one circumferential rib ~~(19)~~.

10. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding~~ claims 1, characterised in that the said tubular body (18) is made of harmonic steel.

11. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 9~~, characterised in that the said tubular body (18;35) is made of plastics material.

12. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding~~ claims 1, characterised in that the tubular body (18;35) is at least partially embedded in the said tread (16).

13. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding~~ claims 1, characterised in that the said membranes (24) are made of anisotropic material.

14. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 13, characterised in that the said membranes (24) are reinforced with fibres which are disposed and oriented such as to prevent localised deformations of the membranes in a loaded condition.

15. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 14, characterised in that the said membranes (24) are reinforced such as to contain the tension forces which are present on the membranes (24) themselves in static load conditions above a dihedron (26) which is tangent to the beads (8) and has a vertex parallel to the axis (13).

16. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ 1, characterised in that the generatrices of the said membranes ~~(24)~~ converge towards one another in order to meet at a point outside the tread ~~(16)~~.

17. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 15~~, characterised in that the generatrices of the said membranes (24) converge towards one another in order to meet at a point inside the tyre ~~(3)~~.

18. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ 1, characterised in that the said membranes ~~(24)~~ have cross-sections which are substantially constant in a radial direction.

19. (Original) Tyre according to claim 18, characterised in that the said cross-sections are substantially rectangular cross-sections.

20. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ 1, characterised in that the said beads ~~(8)~~ comprise at least one annular projection ~~(9)~~ which can engage with a corresponding retention seat ~~(7)~~ when it is fitted onto the wheel rim ~~(2)~~.

21. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ 1, characterised in that the said tread ~~(16)~~ comprises a plurality of apertures ~~(20)~~ for communication with the interior of the tyre; the said apertures ~~(20)~~ being provided to correspond with an equivalent number of apertures ~~(21)~~ provided through the said tubular body ~~(18;35)~~.

22. (Original) Tyre according to claim 21, characterised in that the said apertures are closed by means of materials which are permeable to water, and can prevent the intake of foreign bodies into the tyre.

23. (Original) Tyre according to claim 22, characterised in that the said materials which are permeable to water are porous materials.

24. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ 1, characterised in that the said tread ~~(16)~~ is vulcanised onto an outer surface of the said tubular body ~~(18;35)~~.

25. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ 1, characterised in that the said tread ~~(16)~~ comprises a plurality of outer circumferential grooves ~~(22)~~, and in that the said grooves communicate with the interior of the tyre via a plurality of through-radial passages ~~(20,21)~~.

26. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ 1, characterised in that the said membranes ~~(24)~~ are stretched radially between the said tread and the said beads ~~(8)~~ such as to be pre-tensioned in the absence of loads on the tyre.

27. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~, characterised in that the said membranes ~~(24)~~ are made of homogeneous elastomer material.

28. (Original) Tyre according to claim 27, characterised in that the said homogeneous material is an isotropic material.

29. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 27-~~or 28~~, characterised in that the said membranes ~~(24)~~ are made of polybutadiene rubbers.

30. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 27-~~or 28~~, characterised in that the said membranes ~~(24)~~ are made of polyisoprene rubbers.

31. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 27-~~or 28~~, characterised in that the material of which the said membranes ~~(24)~~ are made comprises polycondensate of dimethylsilanol, wherein the methyl units are substituted by vinyl or phenolic units.

32. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~anyone of the preceding claims 1~~, characterised in that the said blocks ~~{37}~~ project from the said annular belt ~~{36}~~ towards the interior of the tyre.

33. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~anyone of the preceding claims 1~~, characterised in that the said annular belt ~~(36)~~ comprises a plurality of reinforcement threads or strips ~~(39)~~.

34. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 33, characterised in that the said annular belt ~~(36)~~ comprises a portion ~~(38)~~ of elastomer material in which the said reinforcement threads or strips ~~(39)~~ are embedded.

35. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 33 ~~or 34~~, characterised in that the said annular belt ~~(36)~~ is connected integrally to the said tread ~~(16)~~.

36. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 33 ~~or 34~~, characterised in that the said tread is connected to the said annular belt ~~(36)~~ in a manner such that it can be released, so that it can be replaced when it reaches a wear limit.

37. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of claims 34 to 36~~, characterised in that the said annular belt ~~(36)~~ is glued to the said tread ~~(16)~~.

38. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ 1, characterised in that the said blocks ~~(37)~~ are tapered towards the interior of the tyre.

39. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 38, characterised in that the said blocks ~~(39)~~ delimit between one another notches ~~(47)~~ which extend in a direction substantially parallel to the said axis ~~(13)~~.

40. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 38-~~or 39~~, characterised in that the said blocks ~~(37)~~ are distributed in order to form a plurality of axial rows ~~(41)~~ parallel to the said axis ~~(13)~~ and a plurality of circumferential rows ~~(42)~~.

41. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of~~ claims 38-~~to 40~~, characterised in that the said blocks ~~(37)~~ are connected to one another by relative mobility means ~~(43;53)~~ which can permit displacement of the blocks ~~(37)~~ relative to one another during the rotation of the tyre ~~(3)~~.

42. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 41, characterised in that the said relative mobility means are virtual hinges ~~(44; 53,54)~~.

43. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 42, characterised in that the said blocks ~~(37)~~ are connected to one another by connection portions ~~(43)~~ which define the said relative mobility means; the said blocks ~~(37)~~ and the said connection portions constituting part of a body ~~(45)~~ made in a single piece.

44. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 43, characterised in that it additionally comprises means for reaction ~~(52a)~~ which, during the rotation of the tyre, can apply action which opposes that which generates the relative displacement of the said blocks ~~(37)~~.

45. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 44, characterised in that the said means for reaction are interposed between the belt ~~(36)~~ and the blocks ~~(37)~~.

46. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding~~ claims 1, characterised in that the said blocks ~~(37)~~ are solid bodies.

47. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of the preceding~~ claims 1, characterised in that the said blocks ~~(37)~~ are hollow bodies.

48. (Currently amended) Tyre according to claim 47, characterised in that the said tubular reinforcement body ~~(35)~~ has an alveolar structure.

49. (Currently amended) Tyre according to ~~any one of~~ claims 44 to 46, characterised in that the said blocks ~~(37)~~ are connected integrally to the said belt (36) by being glued or vulcanised.

50. (Currently amended) Wheel rim ~~(2)~~ for vehicles, comprising an inner portion ~~(5)~~, two radial annular portions ~~(6)~~ which project from the said inner portion ~~(5)~~ and support respective seats ~~(7)~~ for accommodation of corresponding beads ~~(8)~~, and a tyre ~~(3)~~ produced according to claim 1, and a wall ~~(12)~~ which extends between the said annular portions ~~(6)~~ coaxially to an axis ~~(13)~~ of the wheel rim ~~(2)~~, and in use faces the said tyre ~~(3)~~, characterised in that the said wall ~~(12)~~ comprises a plurality of through-apertures ~~(21)~~ which are permanently open.

51. (Currently amended) Wheel rim according to claim 50, characterised in that it comprises an annular portion ~~(31)~~ which is coaxial to the said axis ~~(13)~~ and is made of elastomer material; the said annular portion ~~(31)~~ defining a radial support stop for the said tread ~~(16)~~.